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Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 /020 W
---------- 049267
R 071827Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4993

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 29120

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: FR, EC, EDTR
SUBJECT: FRENCH DIRECTIVE ON LOW-VOLTAGE HARMONIZATION

REF: STATE 261174
PASS COMMERCE/BIC HECKINEN
1. ON 12 SEPTEMBER 1975, GOF PUBLISHED IN JOURNAL OFFI-CIEL DECREE (DECRET NO.75-848 DU 26 AOUT 1975) IMPLEMENT-ING PROVISIONS OF COMMON MARKET DIRECTIVE (73/23/CEE, 19 FEB 1973) TO HARMONIZE SAFETY REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO LOW-VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. EC DIRECTIVE CALLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER COUNTRIES WITHIN EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF PUBLICATION. GOF IS SECOND EC MEMBER TO PRO-MULGATE REGULATIONS APPLYING PROVISIONS OF DIRECTIVE (AFTER IRELAND); OTHER EC MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO DO LIKEWISE IN NEAR FUTURE, WITH EXCEPTION OF DENMARK (WHICH HAS FIVE YEAR GRACE PERIOD).

2. EC DIRECTIVE AND GOF DECREE APPLY TO ALL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT EMPLOYING VOLTAGES BETWEEN 50 AND 1000 VOLTS AC AND BETWEEN 75 AND 1500 VOLTS DC, ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF ALL ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS SOLD IN FRANCE DURING 1973. SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM THE DIRECTIVE AND DECREE ARE: EXPLOSIVES, RADIOLOGY AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, ELEVATORS, METERS, PLUGS AND OUTLETS, ELECTRIC FENCING, ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELDS, AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT USED ON AIR-PLANES AND TRAINS WHICH OTHERWISE MEETS INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

3. DIRECTIVE AND DECREE PROVIDE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH
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EC MEMBERS MAY ENTER INTO FUTURE AGREEMENTS (COMMUN

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ACCORD) TO HARMONIZE SAFETY REGULATIONS. EFFECT ON SUCH AGREEMENTS WILL BE TO FACILITATE FREE MOVEMENT OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WITHIN COMMUNITY, WHENEVER EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN CERTIFIED TO BE IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS SAFETY REGULATIONS (NORMES HARMONIZEES). AT PRESENT TIME THERE ARE NO SUCH AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.

4. DIRECTIVE AND DECREE ALSO PROVIDE MECHANISM BY WHICH EC COMMISSION, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, MAY PROMULGATE COMMUNITY-WIDE SAFETY STANDARDS FOR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (DISPOSITIONS EN MATIERE DE SECURITE). SUCH STANDARDS MUST BE BASED ON STANDARDS APPROVED BY CENELEC OR INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION (IEC). STANDARDS BECOME EFFECTIVE UPON PUBLICATION BY EC COMMISSION, PROVIDED NO EC MEMBER OBJECTS WITHIN THREE MONTH PERIOD THEREAFTER.

5. IN ABSENCE OF HARMONIZED STANDARDS (PARA 3) OR COMMISSION-PROMULGATED STANDARDS (PARA 4), FRENCH STANDARDS (REGLES DE L'ART EN MATIERE DE SECURITE VALABLES DANS LA COMMUNAUTE) CONTINUE TO APPLY. IN CASE OF IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, DIRECTIVE SPECIFICALLY PROVIDES THAT LOCAL STANDARDS WILL NOT DIRECTLY APPLY. INSTEAD, IMPORTS MUST CONFORM TO SAFETY STANDARDS OF COUNTRY OF FABRICATION, PROVIDED THAT SUCH STANDARDS ARE NOT LESS STRINGENT THAN LOCAL STANDARDS(S'IL ASSURE UNE SECURITE

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EQUIVALENTE A CELLE REQUISE SUR LEUR PROPRE TERRITOIRE). FRENCH DECREE ADDS QUALIFICATION THAT FABRICATION-COUNTRY STANDARDS MUST BE GENERALLY ENFORCED (NORMES EN VIGUEUR).

6. UNION TECHNIQUE DE L'ELECTRICITE (UTE) IS FRENCH ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY CERTIFICATION OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. UTE REPRESENTATIVE HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT U.S. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IMPORTS WHICH BEAR UNDERWRTERS LABORATORIES (UL)
CERTIFICATION WILL GENERALLY MEET SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF GOF DECREE. U.S. IMPORTERS SHOULD OBTAIN UTE CERTIFICATION (SERVICE DE MARQUE) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FRENCH IMPLEMENTATION OF EC DIRECTIVE IS NOT INTENDED TO ALTER PRESENT ACCESSIBILITY OF FRENCH MARKET TO IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.

7. THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT INDIVIDUAL FRENCH CUSTOMS OFFICIALS MAY NOT UNDERSTAND INTENDED APPLICATION OF EC DIRECTIVE. IN THIS EVENT, IMPORTER SHOULD DIRECTLY CONTACT CHAMBRE SYNDICALE DES IMPORTATEURS, 21 RUE SAINT GUILLAUME, PARIS (MR. MAS, SECRETARY GENERAL). CHAMBRE SYNDICALE IS PREPARED TO ASSIST U.S. IMPORTERS IN CORRECT ING MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH MAY ARISE WITH FRENCH CUSTOMS. TO DATE, CHAMBRE SYNDICALE HAS RECEIVED NO REPORTS THAT ACCESSIBILITY OF FRENCH MARKET TO IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN IMPAIRED BY NEW DIRECTIVE AND DECREE.
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8. WILL AIRGRAM FRENCH TEXT OF DIRECTIVE AND DECREE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLICATIONS, ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, SAFETY, STANDARDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS29120
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750388-0181
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751163/aaaacept.tel
Line Count: 152
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 261174
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 OCT 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 OCT 2003 by chicheje>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH DIRECTIVE ON LOW-VOLTAGE HARMONIZATION
TAGS: ETRD, ELEC, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
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